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Letter dated 10 October 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that during the presidency of Romania, the Security Council is scheduled to hold a debate on the subject "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security" on Monday, 17 October 2005.

The presidency has prepared the attached concept paper to help guide the discussion on this subject (see annex).

I would be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mihnea **Motoc**
Ambassador

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Annex to the letter dated 10 October 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept paper

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

Public debate organized by the Security Council, 17 October 2005

Aims

The current debate takes over from the previous consideration of the subject in the Security Council on 20 July 2004, under the Romanian presidency. The purpose is to find ways to enhance the relationship of the United Nations with regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security, in particular, in conflict management and post-conflict stabilization, and to take initial decisions to that end.

Another objective is to take stock at the Security Council level of recent developments in the field, including the 2005 World Summit outcome and the results of the sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations, convened in New York on 25 and 26 July 2005.

Security Council members will be invited to debate modalities to achieve the aforementioned purposes and support a Security Council resolution as an initial step in this respect. Regional organizations will bring their share of views and perspectives to the debate.

Background

The presidential statement *(S/PRST/2004/27)*, made on the occasion of the 5007th meeting of the Security Council, on 20 July 2004 acknowledged the important role that can be played by regional organizations in the prevention, resolution and management of conflicts, including by addressing their root causes.

The statements on that occasion emphasized that the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and that effectively addressing the numerous conflict situations confronting the international community would require an increased level of cooperation with regional organizations, where appropriate.

Member States and heads of regional organizations participating in the meeting stressed their interest in enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. They also considered that regular dialogue on specific issues between the Security Council and regional organizations would bring significant added value in this respect.

The 2005 World Summit opened the way for further work to improve the effectiveness of the United Nations and the multilateral system. World leaders committed themselves to strengthen the United Nations with a view to enhancing its

authority and effectiveness. They also decided on the creation of important new instruments to that effect, in particular, the Peacebuilding Commission.

The leaders supported a stronger relationship between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter, and decided to expand, as appropriate, the involvement of regional organizations in the work of the Security Council. The future Peacebuilding Commission could become a new institutionalized venue for cooperation and close contact between the Council and regional and subregional organizations. The World Summit also expressed support for capacity-building at the regional level, in particular, in relation to the special needs of Africa.

In the same vein, participants in the sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations agreed to convene on an annual basis to monitor developments in international security and promote the goals of the United Nations. Participants also agreed to ensure that their high-level meetings coincide with the meetings held by the Security Council with regional organizations for better efficiency of participation and for substantive complementarity of agendas.

Discussion points

The work to comprehensively reform the United Nations is clearly just at the beginning. Accordingly, the Security Council should have a leading role *in its authority area* in furthering the Summit's call for reforms and, in the present case, for a stronger relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations.

At present this relationship is pursued to a great extent on an *ad hoc basis*, notwithstanding its widely recognized importance as well as its day-to-day impact on the Security Council's activity. Given the significant participation of regional organizations in maintaining peace and security all over the world, the time is right for the relationship between the Council and regional organizations to become *more focused and organized*. The operational role of regional organizations in peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions under the Council's *aegis* is especially relevant.

At the same time, Article 52 of the Charter of the United Nations refers to the early role of regional organizations in settling local disputes, which should be encouraged by the Security Council before it is seized of the matter. Having this in mind, an enhanced relationship between the Council and regional agencies might offer ways also to improve the Council's alertness to local disputes and potential conflicts as well as its own role in *conflict prevention*.

As recognized by leaders at the 2005 World Summit, strengthening the capacity of the African Union and subregional organizations to prevent, mediate and resolve conflicts with the assistance of the United Nations is a priority. The Security Council activity in the last decade points to the same conclusion, that is, the need for strong regional partners in maintaining peace and security on the African continent.

Romania proposes a practically oriented meeting of the Security Council to: (1) take initial measures to deepen and better structure the Council's relationship with regional organizations; (2) follow up in the Security Council responsibility area on the understandings reached at the World Summit in this regard; (3) draw attention to the opinions of regional organizations on the subject, with a view to enhancing their contribution to maintaining international peace and security.

The proposed resolution seeks to set up the framework for dialogue and cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations through annual meetings, regular reporting of the Secretary-General as well as an invitation to Member States to contribute to strengthening the capacity of regional organizations.

The public debate could address the following issues:

- What are the opportunities and challenges for the relationship between the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations *on the way ahead*? Practical cases?
- How to contribute effectively to regional organizations' capacity-building? What can the Council do in this respect?
- How to stimulate regional cooperation and the involvement of regional arrangements in the pacific settlement of local disputes and beyond?
- How to develop the Council's own role in conflict prevention through more effective relations with regional organizations?
- How is the Council to interact more with regional organizations in following up on post-conflict stabilization and peacebuilding?
- How far can we go with setting up principles and procedures for a "*division of labour*" between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security? Is there a way to substantiate principles such as subsidiarity and accountability?
- How can the most effective cooperation with regional organizations in the Peacebuilding Commission be pursued, especially with regard to ensuring a smooth transition from conflict management to post-conflict stabilization and peacebuilding, where regional ownership is needed most?

Practical matters

The meeting will be chaired by the Romanian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The following regional actors are invited to take part in the meeting: the African Union; the African Union Commission; the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; the Commonwealth of Independent States; the Council of Europe; the Economic Community of West African States; the European Union; the League of Arab States; the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; the Organization of American States; the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the South-East Europe Cooperation Process.

Given the number of participants, it is foreseen that the meeting will be a full-day event.

Member States will be asked to kindly limit their intervention to 5 minutes. As guests of the Council, representatives of regional organizations will be allocated 7 minutes per intervention. Participants will be asked to consider distribution of their full intervention.